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- Activities of the Grand Mufti

Source Cryptonym:

Source was in a group with the Grand Mufti when the affairs reported here were discussed.

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Subject: Activities of the
Grand Mufti

Report No: RLB-2647

Date of Information: Early June 1951

Place Acquired: Beirut, Lebanon

Date Acquired: 5 June 1951

Evaluation: B-2

Date of Report: 8 June 1951

Source:

1. The Grand Mufti of Palestine (Hajj) Amin al-HUSAYNI, left Beirut for Damascus on 4 June 1951, whence he will proceed to Cairo. Before leaving Beirut he told members of the Arab Higher Committee office there that he planned to return to Lebanon after Ramadan, i.e., at the end of July or in August.
2. While in Beirut the Mufti stated that he had talked with Col. Adib SHISHAKI about the recruitment of Palestinian refugees by the Syrian Army. He said that Col. SHISHAKI agreed to take a few, but stated that the Army could not at this time absorb the fifteen thousand men that he—the Mufti—~~wanted~~ to give him.
3. The Mufti said that he had discussed with high Syrian officials the matter of actually settling refugees in Syria. He said that they were in agreement that all the refugees could not return to Israel even if the Jews were conquered, because the Jews have to live somewhere and could not be forced into the sea; therefore, some refugees should be settled permanently in Syria. Source ~~says~~ that the Mufti, for undisclosed reasons, showed himself extremely anxious to get the refugees out of Lebanon and into Syria.
4. The Mufti said that the U.N.R.W.A. is impotent and will achieve nothing. (Source comment: The Mufti spent considerable time in Beirut talking with Palestinian U.N. employees and investigating U.N. activities.)
5. The Mufti was also outspoken against the Arab League, challenging it ^{changing} as being a British-inspired group even weaker than the U.N.R.W.A. He said that it must be completely disregarded by all Palestinians and by enlightened Arabs in general.
6. He revealed that one of his chief intelligence sources in Lebanon is ~~Amil GHURI~~ ^{try to scare} Muhammad HAMMADAH, who, he said, sends him "excellent reports." This statement by the Mufti ~~was~~ ^{now} angered Amil GHURI, who is a bitter enemy of HAMMADAH.

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7. The Mufti ~~said~~ that he is opposed to any attempt to resettle the Palestinian refugees abroad, such as in Australia or North or South America, because then they would never return to their homeland. He said that the UARWAQ is considering the possible resettlement of refugees outside the Arab world and that if anything of the sort is attempted he will call on all the refugees to resist it.

8. ^{stated} The Mufti ~~said~~ that he was recently approached in Cairo by two "high-ranking" Britishers who ~~wanted~~ to know what position he would take in the event of a third world war. He said that he told them that, in view of past British actions, he could not stand with them—that Britain, more than any other power, was responsible for the creation of Israel, and that their interference in Iraq and Jordan had kept the full might of the Arab world from being thrown against the Jews.

9. ^{According to the Britishers} However that the two Britishers wanted to know what could be done to win his support in case of another world war. He said that he told them that there would have to be a British promise of complete neutrality and non-interference in matters concerning the Jews and the Arabs, and assistance in keeping the USSR as well out of Jewish-Arab affairs. He said that he told them that if Britain and the USSR will stay out of it the Arab world will liquidate Israel, adding that only British connivance in keeping Syria distrustful of Iraq and Jordan has kept the Arab world from doing the job already.

10. ^{stated} He said that he told the two Britishers that Arab intelligence is excellent; the Arabs know what the Jews have, and know that Syria, Iraq, and Egypt (without Jordan) could defeat Israel if the British and the Americans would adopt a hands-off policy. The USSR, he told them, would stay out if the British asked them to. That, he told them, was his price for cooperation in World War III.

11. The Mufti told members of the Arab Higher Committee in Beirut that the Pakistani government is trying to get a pledge of British non-interference in Jewish-Arab affairs.

Field Notes:

Paragraph 1: The Grand Mufti has been reported recently in MLB's-2538, 2565, 2622, etc.

Paragraph 2: For Col. SHISHAKLI see MLB's-2570, 2604, 2610, 2632, etc. The Mufti's project for putting Palestinian refugees in the Syrian Army was reported in MLB-2622.

Paragraph 6: See MLB's-2287, 2605, 2607, etc., for the feud between ANDAH and GHURI.

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